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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: KRG SWEARS IN UNIFIED CABINET

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SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED -- PROTECT ACCORDINGLY

¶1. (SBU) The Kurdistan Regional Government swore in its new unified cabinet May 7, the major step in its path towards full unification. Until now, the KRG had rival cabinets in Erbil (dominated by the Kurdistan Democratic Party) and in Sulaymaniyah (dominated by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan). Creating eight new regional ministries, the new ministry lineup largely matches that in Baghdad. The extra ministerial slots also helped let the parties avoid losing many cabinet seats as they merged two complete cabinets into one. In unscripted remarks before he began his speech, PM Barzani said the large number of ministries (27) was "transitional" and would later drop.

¶2. (SBU) Revealing one KRG priority, the KRG has created a Natural Resources ministry to deal with oil. In his speech, PM Barzani (highlights septel) mentioned territories Saddam had removed from Kurdish control and that the KRG wants to reclaim through law. To pursue this, the KRG has now named the KDP's Mohammed Ihsan, the former Erbil minister for human rights, to be "Minister for Areas outside the Kurdistan Region" (they did not create a ministry).

¶3. (SBU) Four KRG ministries are not expected to unify for a year: Interior, Finance, Justice and Peshmerga (defense). Interior and finance will keep the same ministers. PUK and KDP each have named new justice ministers and Peshmerga ministers.

¶4. (SBU) The new cabinet has 42 members, only six fewer than the two rival cabinets combined. The parties took the opportunity to bring in fresh blood: well over half of the members are new. Two new ministers were senior PUK Peshmerga commanders. Smaller parties complain that they deserve more cabinet slots. The KDP and PUK remain firmly in control, but each did agree to give up 7 and 4 ministerial slots respectively. Smaller parties almost than doubled their representation, going from 6 slots to 11. Almost all the non KDP or PUK ministers are new; the Turcomans and Christians come from different parties than in the last cabinet. Yezidi and Faili Kurds both joined the cabinet. Although PM Barzani mentioned women's rights in his speech, he appointed only 3 to his cabinet: the previous rival cabinets had at least 3 women each. The three women unified cabinet ministers are Chinar Sa'ad Abdullah, Minister for Martyrs and Anfal Victims, Nazanin Mohammad Waso, Minister for Municipalities, and Dr. Jinan Qasim, a minister without portfolio.

STATISTICS

15. (U) Ministries Continuing to Have At Least One Minister the Same as Before:

Interior (ministry not to unify for one year):

Minister: Osman Haji Mahmud (PUK, was Sulaymaniyah Interior Minister)

(Deputy) Minister of State: Abdul-Karim Sultan Sinjari (KDP, was Erbil Interior Minister)

Finance (ministry not to unify for one year):

Minister: Serkis Aghajan Memendu (KDP, was Erbil Finance Minister and Deputy PM)

(Deputy) Minister of State: Bayiz Sa'id Mohammad Talabani (PUK, was Sulaymaniyah Finance Minister)

Transportation

Minister: Burhan Sa'id Sofi (PUK, was Sulaymaniyah Transp. and Commo Minister)

Communications

Minister: Haydar Sheykh Ali (AKA Hayder Faili)(Kurdistan Communist Party, was Erbil Transport. and Commo. Minister)

(NB: The unified PM Nechivan Barzani was PM in Erbil; the unified Deputy PM Omar Fattah was PM in Sulaymaniyah.)

Unified Ministers Not in Outgoing Cabinets (i.e., new ministers): 25

16. (U) Newly Created Ministries/Portfolios:

(U) The new cabinet creates eight ministries by splitting in two four previously combined ministries: "Industry and Energy," "Transportation and Communication," "Municipalities and Tourism," and "Human Rights, Anfal Victims and Refugees." One half of the "Industry and Energy" ministry becomes the new "Natural Resources" ministry to deal with oil. Another newly emerging, separate ministry is for "Martyrs and Anfal Victims."

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(U) The KRG also created six wholly new ministries:

Water Resources
Planning
Electricity
Sports and Youth
Trade
Environment.

A KDP minister was named, but no ministry established, for "Affairs of Kurdistan Areas outside the KRG" (to push for other Kurdish areas to join the KRG, such as Kirkuk).

(SBU) The KRG abolished its "Cooperation" ministries, which Baghdad reportedly had complained about as proto-MFAs.

17. (U) Party Winners/Losers.

| | Unified Cabinet | Erbil Cabinet | Sulaymaniyah Cabinet |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| KDP Ministers | 15 | 22 | None |
| PUK Ministers | 16 | None | 20 |
| Non KDP or PUK Ministers | 11 | 6 | None |
| Ministers Not Ethnic Kurds | 7 | 5 | None |
| Women Ministers | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Number of Ministries | 26 | 17 | 17 |
| Ministers of State | 4 | None | None |
| Min. with portfolio w/out ministry | 1 | None | None |
| Min. w/out Ministry or portfolio | 9 | 8 | 1 |
| Total number ministers, PM and Dep | 42 | 28 | 20 |
| Party Gains/Losses: | Unified Cabinet | Erbil Cabinet | Sulaymaniyah Cabinet |
| KDP: including PM, Dep (-7) | 15 | 22 | None |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------|
| heading ministries | 10 | 14 | - |
| deputy or with portfolio | 3 | 1 | - |
| without portfolio | 1 | 5 | - |
| PUK: including PM, Dep (-4) | 16 | None | 20 |
| heading ministries | 11 | - | 17 |
| deputy or with portfolio | 2 | - | None |
| without portfolio | 2 | - | 1 |
| Kurdstn Islamic Union (1+) | 2 total | 1 (Justice) | None |
| heading ministries | 1 (Trade) | - | - |
| without portfolio | 1 | - | - |
| Kurdstn Islamic Group (1+) | 1 (Environment) | None | None |
| Turcoman Parties/Ind. (1+) | 2 total | 1 (TDM) | None |
| heading ministries | 1 (Industry) | None | - |
| without portfolio | 1 | 1 | - |
| Christian Parties/Ind. (-1) | 2 total | 3 | None |
| heading ministries | 1 (Tourism) | 1 (Ind. and Engy) | - |
| without portfolio | 1 | 2 | - |
| Independent Faili Kurd (1+) | 1 w/out portfolio | None | None |
| UK. Social Demcrat. Prty (1+) | 1 w/out portfolio | None | None |
| Kurdstn Toilers Prty (1+) | 1 w/out portfolio | None | None |
| Kurdstn Communist Prty(same) | 1 (Com.) | 1 (Trans/Com) | None |

CABINET LIST

18. (SBU) The following is the new cabinet list in the order published on the KRG's web site. Those ministers who lead a ministry not yet unified with its counterpart, where the other party will lead the unified ministry, are called "Ministers of State." Ministers without portfolio are called "Ministers of the Region." (The KRG website also lists female cabinet members without a doctorate as "Mrs.," reproduced below.) Most of the ministers won unanimous approval. While our list is not complete, we have marked with "(maj)" those we know of who faced some opposition in the final, public vote.

- Nechirvan Idris Barzani -- Prime Minister (KDP, was Erbil Prime Minister)
- Omar Fattah Hussayn -- Deputy Prime Minister (PUK, was Sulaymaniyah Prime Minister)
- Osman Haji Mahmud -- Minister for the Interior (PUK, was Sulay. Interior Min.)
- Abdul Karim Sultan Shinjari -- Minister of State for the Interior (KDP, was Erbil Interior Min.)
- Sarkis Aghajan Memendu -- Minister for Finance (KDP, was Erbil Deputy PM and Finance Min., Christian)
- Bayiz Sa'id Muhammad Talabani -- Minister of State for

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Finance (PUK, was Sulay. Finance Min.)

- Faruq Jamil Sadiq -- Minister for Justice (PUK, new)
- Azad Izaddin Mala Afandi -- Minister of State for Justice (KDP, was Erbil Ag and Irrigation Min.)
- Omar Osman Ibrahim -- Minister for Peshmerga Affairs (i.e., defense)(PUK Politburo Member, new to Cabinet)
- Jafar Mustafa Ali -- Minister of State for Peshmerga Affairs (PUK, was head of the PUK's Peshmerga Center, the administrative and personnel branch of the PUK militia, new to Cabinet)
- Burhan Sa'id Sofi -- Minister for Transportation (PUK, was Sulay. Transport Min.)
- Dilshad Abdul Rahman Mohammed -- Minister for Education (PUK, new)
- Dr. Abdul Rahman Osman Younis -- Minister for Health (PUK, new)
- Adnan Mohammad Qadir -- Minister for Social Affairs and Labor (PUK, commanded PUK Peshmerga in the Garmiyar area, i.e., Kifri and Kalar, new to Cabinet)
- Muhammad Ahmad Sa'id Shakaly -- Minister for Awqaf (i.e., Religious Endowments)(PUK, was Sulay. Awqaf Min.)
- Tahsin Qadir Ali -- Minister for Water Resources (PUK, new)

-- Imad Ahmad Sayfur -- Minister for Reconstruction and Housing (PUK, was Sulay. Dep. PM)

-- Osman Isma'il Hassan -- Minister for Planning (PUK, was Sulay. Dep. Finance Min.)

-- Yousif Mohammad Aziz -- Minister for Human Rights (PUK, new)

-- Idris Hadi Salih -- Minister for Higher Education and Scientific Research (KDP, new)

-- Abdul-Aziz Tayeb -- Minister for Agriculture (KDP, was Erbil Ed. Min.)

-- Mrs. Chinar Sa'ad Abdullah -- Minister for Martyrs and Victims of the Anfal (KDP KNA member, new to Cabinet)

-- Falak-Addin Kakayee -- Minister for Culture (KDP, was Erbil Min. without portfolio)

-- Hoshyar Abdul Rahman Siwaily -- Minister for Electricity (KDP, was Dep. Min. for Humanitarian Aid and Coop.)

-- Dr. Ashtee Hawramy -- Minister for Natural Resources (KDP, new)

-- Mrs. Nazanin Muhammad Waso -- Minister for Municipalities (KDP, was Erbil Min. for Reconstruct. and Housing)

-- Taha Abdul Rahman Ali -- Minister for Sports and Youth (KDP, new)

-- Dr. Muhammad Ihmsan -- Minister for Areas outside the Kurdistan Region (KDP, was Erbil Human Rights Min.)

-- Mohammad Raoof Mohammad -- Minister for Trade (Kurdistan Islamic Union, new)

-- Widad Khurshid Osman -- Minister for Industry (Turcoman Brotherhood Cultural Club, new)

-- Dara Mohammad Amin -- Minister for the Environment (Kurdistan Islamic Group, new)

-- Namrood Bithiu -- Minister for Tourism (Assyrian Patriotic Party, new)(maj., ADM's Salim Kako complained privately to RC(A) that Bithiu had been a Baathist until 1996 and more KNA members would have voted against Bithiu had the vote been secret)

-- Haydar Shekh Ali (AKA Hayder Faili) -- Minister for Communications (Kurdistan Communist Party, was Erbil Min. for Transp. and Commo.)

-- Abubakir Ali -- Minister for the Region (Kurdistan Islamic Union, new)

-- Dr. Jinan Qasim -- same title (PUK, new)

-- George Yousif Mansoor -- same title (Independent, Chaldo-Assyrian, new)(maj)

-- Dr. Dakhil Saeed Qasim -- same title (KDP, Yezidi Kurd, new)

-- Mohammad Haji Mahmood -- same title (Kurdistan Social Democratic Party leader, KNA member, new to Cabinet)

-- Mohmood Eido -- same title (PUK, Yezidi Kurd, new)

-- Madhat Mandalawy -- same title (Independent, Faili Kurd, new)

-- Sa'ad Khalid Mohammad Amin -- same title (Kurdistan Toilers' Party, new)

-- Abdul Latif Bandar Oghloo -- same title (Independent, Turcoman, new)(maj)

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